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TRANSIT/2951733/2960032/006:59TOR2960014
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P 1920357 OCT 79
FM (b)(3):10 USC 424
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~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 ~~NOFORN~~
SUBJ: THIS IS IR NO (b)(3):10 USC 424 (U)
THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTEL
1. (U) COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)
2. (U) REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 42
3. (U) TITLE: POLITICAL/MILITARY AFFAIRS -CONSEQUENCES
OF GEN ((MENENDEZ'S)) MINI-REVOLT (U)
4. (U) PROJECT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424
5. (U) DATE OF INFORMATION: 791003-791017
6. (U) DATE OF REPORT: 791018
7. (U) DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 791003-791017,
BUENOS AIRES, AR
8. (U) REFERENCE: (b)(3):10 USC 424
9. (U) ASSESSMENT: A. B.
10. (U) ORIGINATOR:
11. (U) REQUEST EVALUATION:
12. (U) PREPARING OFFICER:
13. (U) APPROVING AUTHORITY:

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14. (U) SOURCE: (b)(3):10 USC 424

15. (U) SPECIAL INSTRS: DIRC-NO; NOFORN CAVEAT APPLIED TO PREVENT EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVT.

16. (C?NF) SUMMARY: THIS REPORT FORWARDS Sec. 3.3(b) (1) OPINIONS OF GEN ((MENENDEZ'S1) MINI-REVOLT WHICH OCCURED ON 790928-790929. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) . THEIR VIEWS, WHILE NOT IDENTICAL, DO REFLECT ONE POINT IN COMMON: BOTH BELIEVE THAT WHILE THE ARMY IS STILL UNITED, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISCONTENT AND MANY OF THE OFFICERS ARE OUTWARDLY WORRIED ABOUT HOW THE COUNTRY IS PROGRESSING.

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22. (C?NF) DETAILS:

A. (C/NF) ON 791013, ONE CONVERSATION WHICH AROSE CONCERNED THE RECENT MINI-REVOLT HEADED BY MAJ GEN MENENDEZ. SOURCE (A) STATED THAT NUMEROUS OFFICERS WERE IN AGREEMENT WITH THE PHILOSPHY ON WHICH MENENDEZ BASED HIS MINI-REVOLT AGAINST VIOLA (I.E., THE CONTINUING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, THE PROBLEM CREATED BY TIMMERMAN'S RELEASE, AND THE BOMBING ATTACK ON KLEIN'S RESIDENCE, WHICH INDICATED THAT THE TERRORIST THREAT STILL EXISTED.) SOURCE STATED THAT MENENDEZ'S ACTIONS WERE, IN HIS OPINION, THE RESULT OF FRUSTRATION ON MENENDEZ'S PART CONCERNING THE WAY THE VIDELA/VIOLA TEAM WAS RUNNING THE COUNTRY. HE STATED THAT ONE OF THE REASONS THAT THE MINI-REVOLT WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL WAS THE FACT THAT PART OF THE PLAN REQUIRED THAT THREE OF THE BRIGADE COMMANDERS WITHIN MENENDEZ'S 3RD CORPS WERE TO HAVE BEEN ARRESTED - THIS DID NOT TRANSPIRE AND AS A RESULT MENENDEZ DID NOT HAVE ANY SUPPORT AMONG HIS THREE COMBAT BRIGADES WITHIN THE CORPS. HE MENTIONED FURTHER THAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WAS TO HAVE COME FROM ELEMENTS HERE IN BUENOS AIRES (HE DID NOT FURTHER ELABORATE ON THIS POINT). SOURCE INDICATED THAT VIDELA AND VIOLA WERE, IN HIS OPINION, WISHY-WASHY AND WHAT THE COUNTRY NEEDED WAS A STRONGER LEADER. IN THIS RESPECT, HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT MENENDEZ WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL IN HIS REVOLT AND THAT SOMEONE WITH A STRONGER HAND HAD NOT BEEN PLACED IN COMMAND OF THE ARMY. WHILE SOURCE WAS TALKING, THEY TOO BELIEVED THAT WHAT THE COUNTRY

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NEEDED WAS A STRONGER HAND AND A STRONGER LEADER. SOURCE RELATED [redacted] THAT, IN HIS OPINION, THE COUNTRY HAD NOT SEEN THE LAST OF MENENDEZ; YES HE WAS BEING PLACED ON THE RETIREMENT LIST, AND, YES HE WAS BEING PLACED IN CONFINEMENT FOR 90-DAYS: BUT, IF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION DETERIORATED FURTHER AND TERRORIST BOMBINGS CONTINUED, AT SOME POINT THE COUNTRY WOULD BE LOOKING FOR A STRONG LEADER - SUCH AS MENENDEZ - AND HE WOULD BE RECALLED FROM RETIREMENT TO POSSIBLY LEAD THE COUNTRY. IN STATING THIS, HE DID NOT SAY IT WAS POSITIVE, BUT THAT IT WOULD NOT BE THE FIRST TIME SUCH A PHENOMENON HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THAT PREVIOUSLY GEN LANUSSI HAD BEEN PLACED UNDER ARREST AND THEN SUBSEQUENTLY RECALLED TO BECOME THE PRESIDENT. AS A RESULT OF MENENDEZ'S ACTION AND BEING PLACED ON THE RETIRED LIST, HE WOULD BE OUT OF THE POLITICAL/MILITARY SCENE AND THEREFORE COULD MAINTAIN A PURE IMAGE IF CONDITIONS CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE WITHIN THE COUNTRY.

B. ~~(C/NF)~~ SOURCE INDICATED THAT ANOTHER POSSIBLE STRONG MAN CANDIDATE FOR ARMY CINC WAS GEN ((HARGUINDEGUY)), PRESENTLY THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. WE TALKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF WHO MIGHT BECOME THE NEXT CINC (I.E., GALTIERRI, SUAREZ MASON, ETC); IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT SOURCE STATED WE SHOULD NOT FORGET HARGUINDEGUY; IN THAT HARGUINDEGUY HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE ECONOMIC MINISTER - MARTINEZ DE HOZ. HE FURTHER STATED THAT WE SHOULD ALSO NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY OF HARGUINDEGUY BECOMING PRESIDENT IN 1981, WHEN VIDELA RETIRES. IN THIS RESPECT, HE ALSO SAID HARGUINDEGUY WAS MARTINEZ DE HOZ'S CHOICE FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN 1981. HE INDICATED FURTHER THAT ALL THE GOVERNORS WITHIN ARGENTINA ALSO SUPPORTED HARGUINDEGUY. HE TERMINATED THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING THAT HARGUINDEGUY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE COUNTRY; HE HAS GOOD LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH ALL THE PROVINCES, AND VERY POSSIBLY, HE IS THE TYPE OF PERSON ARGENTINA NEEDS TO GET CONDITIONS BACK ON TRACK, BECAUSE, AS FAR AS SOURCE WAS CONCERNED, THINGS WERE NOT GOING WELL IN THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE PRESENT PRESIDENT AND ARMY CINC. THE OTHER TWO INDIVIDUALS AT THE TABLE, AT THIS POINT, NODDED THEIR APPROVAL AND MORE

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~~OR LESS REPEATED WHAT SOURCE (A) HAD BEEN STATING.~~
C. ~~(S/NF)~~ SOURCE (B) (b)(3):10 USC 42 LUNCH AT THE AMERICAN CLUB ON 791017. DURING THE COURSE OF CONVERSATION, (b)(3):10 USC 424 SOURCE HIS OPINION OF THE MENENDEZ REVOLT. SOURCE STATED THAT MENENDEZ THINKS ONLY AT THE MILITARY STRATEGIC LEVEL RATHER THAN AT THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC LEVEL. THESE TWO TERMS IN ARGENTINE MILITARY VERNACULAR ARE VERY IMPORTANT, WHICH TRANSLATED INTO EVERYDAY TERMS MEAN MENENDEZ IS A GOOD MILITARY LEADER, BUT A POOR POLITICIAN. SOURCE FELT THAT MENENDEZ WAS FRUSTRATED WITH THEMANNER IN WHICH CONDITIONS HAD BEEN PROGRESSING AND WAS COMPELLED TO TAKE ACTION. SOURCE BELIEVES THAT THERE WAS PRE-PLANNING IN THE MINI-REVOLT AND THAT IT WAS NOT A SPONTANEOUS ACTION ON MENENDEZ'S PART. SOURCE BELIEVES THAT MENENDEZ PROBABLY HAD CERTAIN CIVILIANS WITHIN 3RD CORPS AREA PUSHING HIM TO TAKE SOME TYPE OF ACTION AND ALSO THAT THERE WAS A SMALL MILITARY ELEMENT WHICH WAS SIMULTANEOUSLY INSTIGATING MENENDEZ TO TAKE ACTION. (b)(3):10 US

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SOURCE WHETHER HE BELIEVED THERE WAS SOME SORT OF SUPPORT EXPECTED FROM BUENOS AIRES. SOURCE RESPONDED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE ANY INFO IN THIS AREA; BUT, HE BELIEVED THAT SUAREZ MASON DELIBERATELY STAYED OUT OF THE PICTURE SO HE WOULD NOT GET HIS HANDS DIRTY BY THE OPERATION. SOURCE INDICATED THAT MENENDEZ PROBABLY MISREAD THE POLITICAL SCENE AND ALSO MISREAD THE AMOUNT OF SUPPORT WHICH HE EXPECTED TO RECEIVE DURING HIS MINI-REVOLT. HE FURTHER STATED THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE REVOLT WAS NOT SPONTANEOUS BASED UPON THE WORKING OF MENENDEZ'S REQUEST FOR VIOLA'S RESIGNATION (CITE TR (b)(3):10 USC 424 SOURCE RELATED THAT THE WORKING OF THE REQUEST WAS WELL DONE AND WELL THOUGHT OUT, WHICH IS ONE OF THE REASONS HE BELIEVES THAT THERE WERE PROBABLY CIVILIANS AND OTHER MILITARY OFFICERS INVOLVED IN THE FORMULATION OF THE REQUEST. SOURCE INDICATED THAT PROBABLY HALF (OR MORE) OF THE OFFICERS WITHIN THE ARMY WERE IN TOTAL AGREEMENT WITH MENENDEZ'S REASONS FOR REQUESTING VIOLA'S RESIGNATION. MENENDEZ'S ONLY PROBLEM IN THIS RESPECT WAS THE WAY IN WHICH HE WANTED TO GO ABOUT THE CHANGE. WHILE OFFICERS AGREE WITH THE REASONS FOR MENENDEZ'S ACTION, THEY DO NOT AGREE AND WILL NOT GO ALONG WITH A COUP/REVOLT TYPE CHANGE IN GOVT, WHICH IS THE WAY CHANGES TOOK PLACE IN THE PAST. THE NEW BREED OF OFFICERS, WHILE DISCONTENT WITH THE PRESENT CONDITIONS, LOOK TO OTHER MEANS TO CHANGE LEADERSHIP. (b)(3):10 USC 424 ASKED SOURCE WHAT HE BELIEVED THE CONSEQUENCES OF MENENDEZ'S ACTIONS WOULD BE ON THE ARMY AND THE GOVT. SOURCE STATED THAT IT COULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED AT A WORSE TIME. IT IS SOURCE'S OPINION THAT THE PRESENT WAVE OF LABOR UNREST (STRIKES) AND CRITICISM COMING FROM POLITICAL ELEMENTS OUTSIDE OF THE GOVT ARE A DIRECT RESULTS OF THE MENENDEZ ACTION. SOURCE EXPLAINED THIS BY STATING THAT POLITICIANS AND LABOR VIEW THE BREAKDOWN OF DISCIPLINE IN THE ARMY AS A SIGNAL THAT THEY TOO CAN START VOICING THEIR DISPLEASURE WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE BEING RUN. SOURCE WAS, IN THIS RESPECT, DISTURBED AND WORRIED THAT PROBABLY WE HAVE NOT SEEN THE LAST OF THIS TYPE OF ACTION AND CONTINUED LABOR/POLITICAL UNREST WILL CONTINUE.

(b)(3):10 USC 424;Sec

D. ~~(C/NF)~~ [redacted] SOURCE WHO HE THROUGHT THE NEXT ARMY CINC WOULD BE AND HE INDICATED PRESENT CONTENDERS WERE SUAREZ MASON, GALTIERRI, AND VAQUERO. HE SAID ONLY TIME COULD TELL WHICH INDIVISUAL WOULD FINALLY BECOME CINC. SOURCE THOUGHT SUAREZ MASON WOULD PROBABLY BE RETIRED AND THAT GALTIERRI WOULD BECOME ARMY CINC, BUT HE ALSO INDICATED THAT GALTIERRI DID NOT HAVE THE FIRM HAND THAT THE ARMY NEEDED RIGHT NOW. WHEN ASKED ABOUT HARGUINDEGUY'S CHANCE TO BECOME ARMY CINC AND

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POSSIBLY PRESIDENT OF THE NATION. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) IS OF THE OPINION THAT HARGUINDEGUY SHOULD BOT BE DISCOUNTED. HE INDICATED THAT ALL THE GOVERNORS AND MARTINEZ DE HOZ WOULD SPONSOR HIM AS A POSSIBLE FUTURE PRESIDENT, BUT, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, HE WAS NOT THE TYPE OF POLITICIAN THAT ARGENTINA NEEDED. HE PICTURED HARGUINDEGUY AS A GOOD CAVALRY/HARD CHARGING POLO PLAYER, BUT NOT A POLITICALLY SAVVY INDIVIDUAL. ~~(C/NF)~~ COMMENTS: A. THIS REPORT REFLECTS THE OPIONS OF TWO DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS CONCERNING THE RESULTS OF GEN MENENDEZ'S MINI-REVOLT.

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HIS VIEWS REFLECT WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE CONSIDERED THE OPINIONS OF MANY OF THE OLDER OFFICERS AND RETIRED OFFICERS WITHIN THE ARMY (I.E., THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE A FIRMER LEADER DIRECTING THE COUNTRY). THEY SEE MENENDEZ'S ACTION AS BEING CORRECT AND THE REASONS FOR THE REVOLT BEING AGREED UPON BY MANY INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THE ARMY AND GOVT. SOURCE (A) WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE REVOLT WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT [redacted] TALKED WITH SOURCE SO HIS RELIABILITY CANNOT BE VERIFIED. HOWEVER, THE OTHER TWO INDIVIDUALS SEATED AT THE TABLE WITH [redacted] HAVE BEEN KNOWN

(b)(3):10 USC 424

(b)(3):10 USC 424;Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

HE IS PROBABLY A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE YOUNGER OFFICERS (I.E., MAJOR, LTC LEVEL). WHILE THEY AGREE THAT MENENDEZ'S ACTION WAS BASED ON GOOD CAUSE, THEY DO NOT AGREE WITH THE METHOD HE CHOSE TO RECTIFY THE CONDITION. SOURCE'S OPINIONS ARE A CHANGE FROM THOSE WHICH HE RELATED TO (b)(3):10 USC 424 APPROXIMATELY 9 TO 10 MONTHS AGO, WHEN DISCUSSION OF THESE SAME SUBJECTS OCCURRED (I.E., HOW THE MILITARY WAS DIRECTING THE COUNTRY). DURING OUR LATEST CONVERSATION HE STATED THAT HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE MANNER IN WHICH DEVELOPMENTS WERE OCCURRING AND HE EXPECTED FURTHER PROBLEMS WITHIN THE ARMY. HE INDICATED THAT THE ARMY WAS UNITED IN NOW WANTING TO SEE BLOODSHED, BUT HE ALSO INDICATED THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE INDIVIDUALS THAT HE KNEW WITHIN THE ARMY (I.E., HIS AGE LEVEL) HAVE THE SAME WORRIES THAT HE HAS AND WERE GENERALLY DISTURBED WITH THE PROGRESS IN THE GOVT.

~~REVW 18 OCT 1989~~

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